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VIII.—*De Lingua Othomitorum Dissertatio*. Auctore Emanuele Naxera, Mexicano, Academiae Litterariae Zacatecarum Socio. (Ex quinto tomo Novae Seriei Actorum Societatis Philosophicae Americanae decerpta.) Philadelphiae. 1835. 4to.

OF all the ethnographical questions the solution of which has never yet been satisfactorily obtained, none perhaps is more deserving of further investigation than the origin of the various tribes scattered over the two American peninsulas; and among these, the Peruvians and Mexicans, as being the only nations in the New World, who, at the time of its discovery, possessed any of the arts of civilized life, demand our closest attention, and offer the largest number of elements for the construction of any probable theory to account for their origin. Whatever, therefore, can enlarge or give accuracy to our knowledge of those nations, is a valuable accession to the materials we already possess, for the pursuit of such inquiries; and every one who takes any interest in tracing the progress and migrations of the human race will rejoice on finding that these subjects have engaged the attention, and exercised the pen of those who, in many respects, are best qualified for such investigations—the enlightened natives of these very states. To that class, in an eminent degree, does the writer of this Dissertation belong. Don Manoel Naxera, a member of the Literary Society of Zacatecas, has employed a part of the leisure unhappily afforded, as it seems (p. 1), by exile from his country, in illustrating that language which, among all the five-and-thirty radically distinct tongues spoken in Mexico, is the most singular and, as it should seem, the most ancient. It is called by the tribe to whom it is vernacular, *Hyang-hyung*, or “the language of those who are sedentary;” while they name themselves *Ot’homi*,* or “the restless;” as if they meant to imply that their language first deserved a name when a part of their people had become stationary, or, in other words, had reached that step in civilization which is so essential to improvement in the arts of civilized life, and among those arts the cultivation of the language which they speak.

The principal settlements of this tribe, or nation, were in the northern part of the Great Valley, or table-land of Mexico, and in the adjoining mountains, where they occupied a tract extending about thirty miles from the metropolis. Their principal cities were anciently Tollan (Tolyan) and Xilotepec (Khilotepek); the latter of which is perhaps even now their capital. Another portion of the Ot’homis held the fruitful valley of Toloacan, south-west of

* Clavigero, *Historia di Messico*, IV., i. 2. Humboldt, *Essai Politique*, p. 81. Adelung und Vater, *Mithridates*, III., i. 30.

Mexico, in common with the Matlasinches, an entirely different race; and the remainder, who appear never to have abandoned a migratory and pastoral state, supported themselves by the chase, together with the wandering families of the Cicimeches, to the north and north-west of the Mexican valley. The province of Masahwakan, in the mountains to the west of Mexico, was also inhabited by the Masahwi, another division of this tribe.

Their language, the peculiar subject of the Dissertation named above, has nothing in common with any of its neighbours, except the conjugation of its verbs—manifestly borrowed, as the author thinks (p. 4), from the Mexicans and Hwastekas.* It is virtually monosyllabic, as almost all its polysyllables are clearly compounds; its vowels are often nasal and guttural, and are varied by protraction or intonation. The consonants *f* and *l* are wanting, but *ch* and *w* occur; and *k* and *l* are aspirated, as in the Hindú, by a distinct aspiration, not by transfusion as in the European languages. Some of the gutturals and intonations are scarcely utterable by any but natives, and cannot be adequately expressed without a peculiar character (p. 5). The consonants, of which the sounds occur in the Ot'homí, are *p*, *b*; *t*, *d*; *k*, *g*; *m*, *n*; *s*, *z*; *r*, *y*, and *w*: the vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, with the power given to them by the Italians, Spanish, Portuguese, and Germans. The harsh guttural, commonly expressed by *kh*, and *ch*, pronounced as in Spanish and English, are of frequent occurrence, as well as *n'h*, *p'h*, and *k'h*; which last is called *cc castañuelas*, because it expresses a sound like the noise made in cracking nuts. The *r* is slightly uttered, as in English. The *ny*, or liquid *n†* of the French, Italians, Spaniards, and Portuguese, is not uncommon; as is a slight nasal less sensible to the ear than our *ng*. A final, medial, and initial sound,‡ moreover, often occurs, which appears to be an aspirated nasal indistinctly uttered, and peculiarly difficult to express by any combination of letters. *h*, *mm*, *nn*, *ngg*, and *ng*, are employed, as its equivalent, by different writers on this inexpressible tongue (p. 6).

In its grammatical structure, the simplicity of the Ot'homí exceeds even that of the Chinese. Inflexions it has none; and only fifteen or sixteen insignificant particles, one of which, *ya*, is subjoined to mark the plural. The numeral *na* (one) serves as a pronoun and an article. Position and the context determine whether a word is verb, noun, adjective, or adverb; but *na* prefixed forms an abstract noun; *sa* a neuter adjective. There is no other distinction of gender. Thus, *sa n'ho'* is bonum; *na n'ho'*, bonitas;

* This must be understood as respecting its principle only; for there is no etymological resemblance between the verbs of these three languages.

† Written by them, respectively, *gn*, *nn*, (*ñ*) or *nh*.

‡ Here expressed by an apostrophe *n'ho'*, *te'*, &c.

and *na n'ho' yeng'h*, bonus homo. The adjective always precedes its noun. The structure of the verb is, as before remarked, more complex. The change of time and person is expressed by fourteen particles : e. g.—

di te', I do.

di te' hmang, I was doing.

gi te', Thou doest.

I te', He doth.

ksta te', I did.

ksta te' hmang, I had done.

ga te', I will do.

ga ksta te', I shall have done.

The same prefixes are also used in the plural, with the affixes, 1, *wi*; 2, *ki*, *wi*, *hung*; 3, *yung*.

In the preterite, 1, *da*; 2, *ga*; 3, *bi*; are the prefixes both for the singular and plural: 1, *he*; 2, *wi* and *hung*; 3, *yung*; the plural suffixes. *Ksta*, *ksa*, *sta*, *ska* or *sa*, are often substituted for the former; and the suffix *hmang* forms the pluperfect and the imperfect. *Ga*, *gi*, and *da*, are the prefixes for the future: and *ga ksta*, *ska*, or *sa*, those which form the future-perfect. The imperative is always a compound phrase, as *te'-te' do*, *do*; i. e., cause to do; *hyung-tsi*, “bring to put;” but idiomatically they signify simply “do,” “put,” &c. Each tense seems to have its peculiar imperative, some of which are formed by the repetition of the same verb, as *té-té*, “touch, touch;” others, by a phrase consisting of a verb and a noun or adverb,—e. g., *sé gwa*, “pull foot,” i. e. salute. The prefixes *ni*, *ma* or *mi*, and *na*, distinguishing the present, past, and future, respectively, appear to be the only verbal particles anciently used by the Ot'homis (p. 40). The future, as in modern Greek, performs the functions of the infinitive. In this mode of conjugating the verb, nothing, it must be observed, but the method can be ascribed to the influence of the Hwasteka and Mexican, as the affixes and suffixes in those languages are entirely different from the Ot'homis. The active voice is the only form of the verb; passives, causatives, iteratives, and all other derivatives being wholly unknown (p. 10). There is no verb substantive—*di n'ho'* signifies “I (am) good;” but the suffix *we* is perhaps equivalent to “be,” or “let it be”—*di mem-t'hi*, “I (am) rich”—ego dives; *mem-t'hi we*, “be (thou) rich”—dives esto.

The agent is expressed by a very obvious compound, *te'*, “make,” being added to the abstract noun; thus, *mang-te'*, “make love,” signifies “a lover.” (p. 13.)

Toö, “who,” seems to be the only relative in the language.

Brief and cursory as this summary may appear, it comprehends all the essential elements of the Ot'homis tongue; and one very obvious inference immediately presents itself—the many points of coincidence between this tongue and the Chinese, the most inartificial of all cultivated languages. This remarkable circumstance

could not escape the notice of so learned and acute an inquirer as Don Manoel Naxera ; and he has, therefore, devoted the second part of his Dissertation to an examination of the Chinese grammar, for the purpose of showing how completely all its chief peculiarities are found in the Ot'homi. To follow him, step by step, through this laborious investigation would occupy more time and space than can be allowed in this notice of his Dissertation. To it, therefore, the reader must be referred ; and it will be sufficient to mention, that the parallelism hardly ever fails—that the structure of the two languages is, in every essential point, the same ; and that, when the long succession of ages during which the Chinese has been cultivated as a written language is taken into consideration, it is more wonderful that it should retain so much of its original simplicity as to bear any resemblance to so unformed a tongue as the Ot'homi, than that they should in any respect differ.

Nor is it merely in their internal mechanism that this accordance is found. In their outer clothing, if such an expression be admissible, the same affinity may be traced. Not only are they both monosyllabic, but in both we discover the same paucity of distinct syllables ; in both, gutturals and nasals (especially as finals) abound ; and in both, the sense in many cases depends solely on the intonation and quantity of the vowel. The Ot'homi, therefore, strictly belongs to the monosyllabic family of languages, confined, it may be affirmed, with this solitary exception, to China and some of its nearest neighbours.

As many of the words given in Don M. Naxera's comparative vocabulary (p. 27-29) do not at first sight show a close resemblance with their equivalents in Chinese, some readers may be disposed to doubt whether any affinity between them can really be traced ; but if allowance be made for the indistinctness of the Chinese consonants, their omission of all harsh finals, and the alterations which must have occurred in the course of ages, we shall have more reason for surprise at the many instances of near agreement in the oral languages of these two nations, than cause for disputing their affinity where it cannot be easily traced.

In an Appendix to his Dissertation, the author has added,—
 1. A vocabulary of the Ot'homi language (p. 32-36). 2. A list of compound words, which are for the most part phrases used in a conventional sense ; as *tsi-nsu*, "child-woman"—i. e., a daughter ; *yo-hmi*, "double-face"—i. e., a traitor ; *si-ne*, "leaf-mouth"—i. e., a lip ; *k isa-ne*, "in mouth"—i. e., the tongue. In many cases the second member of the compound is added exactly as in Chinese, merely to remove ambiguity : *ye-he*, "man-beget"—i. e., "a man," is used for *ye* because that word may signify "rain ;" *de-he*, "cold-water"—i. e., water (*de* alone signifying "egg, covering," &c.) ; *ba-tsi*, "begotten-child"—i. e., a son ;

tsi, when taken separately, meaning “ little, tooth, end,” &c.
 3. Examples of the modes and tenses of verbs, with their compound imperatives. The unaugmented imperative is in this, as in most other languages, the root of the verb; a peculiarity first noticed by Don Luiz de Neve y Molina (p. 11), who was himself an Ot’homi, and the first of the Spanish-American grammarians who ventured to shake off the trammels of Antonio de Nebrixa (p. 12-16), and abandon the grammatical arrangement borrowed from the Greek and Latin. 4th. Some phrases for the purpose of showing how the class to which a word belongs is determined by its place; e. g.—

<i>nya</i> , or <i>gi n’ho’</i> ,	Thou (art) good.
<i>n’ho’ we</i> ,	Good be.
<i>na</i> , or <i>i na m’hang</i> ,	Thou empty wast.
<i>na we</i> ,	Empty be.

The author, it must be observed, considers *we* as a verbal particle, indicating that the preceding word is not an adjective, but the verbal root. The Ot’homis, he maintains, have no verb substantive whatever. “ How then,” he adds (p. 40), “ would they express that divine sentence, ‘ EGO SUM QUI SUM?’ ” “ By this phrase, *ma hu na* (My name I),” is his answer. But whether the Ot’homi would comprehend it or not, he acknowledges he is unable to determine.

5. The Lord’s Prayer, with a grammatical commentary, and a shorter version. 6 and 7. Some short sentences to illustrate the syntax. 8, 9, 10, 11. Prepositions, pronouns, forms of salutation, and adverbs. 12. The numerals. 13. The eleventh ode of Anacreon, in Greek and Latin, with an Ot’homi version and explanatory notes.

As the work in which this Dissertation is published cannot, from its size and object, be widely circulated in this country, the Lord’s Prayer and the numerals, in the Ot’homi language, are here subjoined, for the convenience of such readers as have not access to the original.

1. *The Lord’s Prayer, as rendered by Andrea Olmos.*

1. <i>Ma t’ha’* he ni bu’i ma-hen-tsi</i>	Noster Pater habitas cœlum
My father we thou dwell side wide round †	
2. <i>Da ne an-sun† ni hun-hun</i>	Vocabunt sanctum tuum nomen
will call santo thy name name	
3. <i>Da en-hen ga he ni bu’i</i>	Veniet erga nos tua habitatio
will come approach to us thy dwelling	

* The apostrophe marks a strong guttural hiatus like the “ aïn ” of the Arabs. The *n* with a dot above it is a nasal not quite so harsh as our final *ng* in “ sing,” “ king,” &c.

† This literal version is as given by the author.

‡ “ Ansung ” is formed from the Spanish word “ santo.”

4. <i>Da k'ha ni k'nee</i> will do thy will	Facient tua voluntas
5. <i>Nu' wa na ha'i</i> as here that earth	Et ita hic terra
6. <i>Te nu' ma-hen-tsi</i> which as heaven	Sicut cœlum
7. <i>Ma hmen' he ta na' pu</i> my bread we every every day	Noster panis quæque dies
8. <i>Ra' he na ra pa ya</i> give we every every day new	Da nos unus dies nova
9. <i>Ha pu-ni he</i> and dismiss grow we	Et parce nos
10. <i>Ma du-pa-te' he</i> my debt sell make we	Nostra debita
11. <i>Ten' nu' di pu-ni he</i> which so am dismiss grow we	Sicut nos parcimus
12. <i>U ma n'du-pa-te' he</i> now my debt sell make we	Nunc debitores nostri
13. <i>Ha yo wi hen' he</i> and not thou allow we	Et cave ne permittere nos
14. <i>Ga he k'ha na tso' ka-di</i> slip we into that bad do fulfill	Labemur in turpis actio
15. <i>Ma na pe-he he hin n'ho'</i> but rather redeem save we not good	Sed salva nos non bonum
16. <i>Da k'ha.</i> will do.	Facient (hoc est, <i>Amen</i>).

2. *A Shorter Version.*

<i>Go sna t'ha'</i>	Domine meus Pater
<i>To wi bu'i</i>	Qui tu habitas
<i>Hen-tsi</i>	Extensionem incircum (cœlum)
<i>Da-ma ka ni hu'n</i>	Dicent sanctum tuum nomen
<i>Da-di ni hne</i>	Exequatur tui voluntas
<i>Ha'i he hen-tsi</i>	Terrâ (in) et cœlo
<i>Ma hmen ta pa</i>	Meus panis quæque tempus
<i>Sa da he ni</i>	Placeat (si) da nos nunc
<i>Ha pu-ni ma t'ha'i he</i>	Et parcere germinare mea debita nos
<i>Nu' i pu ma t'ha'i ti' he</i>	Sicut parcimus meus debiti factor nos (nostros)
<i>Ha yo ho he ga so tso' di.</i>	Et cave ne consentire nos labi provocari exequi.

Two petitions are here omitted, which seem to have escaped the author's notice.

His style, though far from faultless, and often obscure, shows that the ancient literature of Europe has not been neglected in the schools of Mexico; and the learned world is indebted to him for having conveyed his information in a language more universally diffused than the Spanish.

Besides the books in the Ot'homí language mentioned by Dr. Vater (Mithridates, iii. 115), some others, the names of which are here subjoined to a list of the numerals, are cited in this Dissertation.

Numerals.

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Na, ra, | 4. Go'. | 7. Yo-to', | 10. Reng-ta, |
| 2. Yo, ho, | 5. Kung-tto. | 8. Hyang-to', | 11. Reng-ta nora, |
| 3. Hyang, | 6. Ra-to', | 9. Go'-to', | &c. &c. |

1. Oraciones y Doctrina Cristiana en Lengua Otomi—Mexico. 15—

2. Catecismo y Declaracion de la doctrina Cristiana en Lengua Otomi, computeso por el R. P. Fr. Joaquin López, Yepes, Predicador Apostolico, &c. Megico. 1826.

IX.—*Illustrations of the Botany and other branches of the Natural History of the Himalayan Mountains, and of the Flora of Cashmere.* By J. Forbes Royle, Esq., F.L.S., G.S., &c. London. 1834-5.

THIS work is at present publishing in parts, of which seven have already appeared. It consists first, of an introduction, in which general views are given of the physical geography of the whole of India; and next of a principal text, in which minute details are added of the natural history of the southern face of the great Himalayan range, and immediately adjoining plains. The work is chiefly addressed to the scientific naturalist, but contains much that is also interesting to the more general student. We are not without hopes that, at some future time, the learned author will either furnish us himself with an abstract of what may be considered most exclusively geographical of the information which he has collected—or permit us to draw on his materials at sufficient length really to convey an idea of their extent and importance. In the meantime we shall attempt little more than to notice their general scope.

India, according to its natural boundaries, stretches from 35° to 22°, with its peninsula extending to 8° of north latitude; and from 67° to 95° of east longitude. Its extreme length and breadth are nearly equal, viz., about 2000 miles: but its figure is so irregular that its superficial area is not estimated higher than 1,280,000 English miles. It is bounded on the S.W. by the Indus, and on the N.E. by the Himalayan mountains, being washed on the two remaining principal sides by the Indian ocean. From its southern portions approaching so near to the equator, and its northern being nearly in the latitude of the south of Europe, great diversity may be expected both in the temperature of its climate and the character of its productions; and this diversity is further increased by the varying elevation of its surface in different places.

The Himalayan mountains rise to a prodigious height in its immediate vicinity, and three other systems of mountains traverse it in different directions, viz. the western and eastern